

## Lesson 10

# Checkmate

*This lesson is a continuation of the concept taught in lesson 9: CPR.*

Once the CPR method has been fully understood by student a natural extension question is “what if I go through my CPR strategy and I have no options to get my King safe?” When this situation happens it is called checkmate.

**Checkmate:** If the King is in check and cannot get out of check (using CPR) then we say the King is checkmated and the game is lost.

If a player checkmates their opponent then they have won the game – this is how one wins a real game of chess. Beginners can find it difficult to get their heads around checkmate as it is not easily comparable to other concepts in maths, story or life. As when teaching any new concept repeated and varied practice will lead to all beginners understanding it.

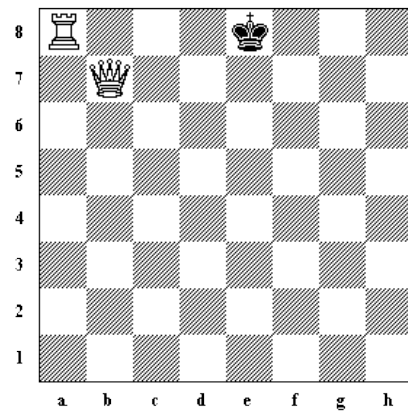
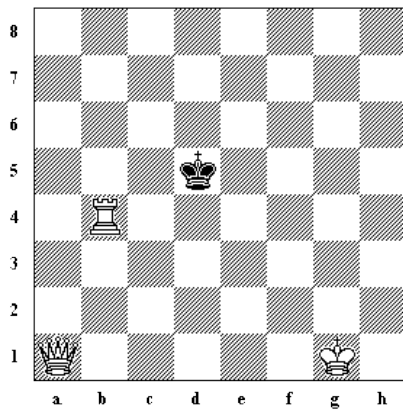
Note: The King can never be captured in real chess. Once check mate is achieved players shake hands and the game is over.

### 4-Step Approach to Teaching Checkmate

1. Teach the definitions & CPR method
2. Simple mini end-game patterns (K v R, Q, K etc.)
3. Checkmate puzzles
4. Play, play, play (and show checkmates to all when they do occur)

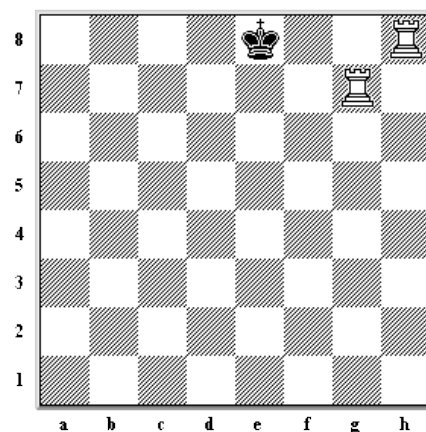
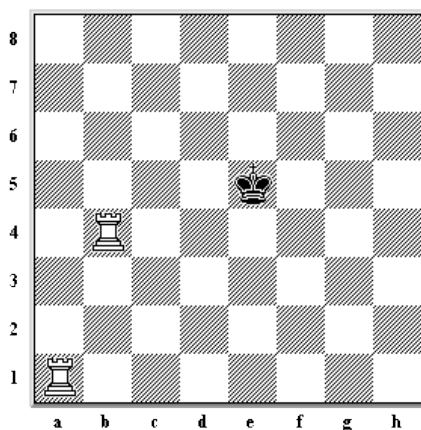
Simple Mini End-Game Patterns:

**1. Checkmating with Queen and Rook versus King**



Set up the board as shown on the left. On the right is the desired checkmate. See the video link on the Ficheall.ie website next to this lesson plan for some ideas on forcing the King to the edge of the board. Once you have demonstrated the method to the students allow them to set up their boards using the start position on the left above and try to achieve checkmate (as shown on the right). We call this type of checkmate a lawnmower checkmate. Remember: students should proceed through the CPR method to assess if checkmate has been achieved.

**2. Checkmating with two rooks**



Similarly, set up the board as on the left and aim to achieve a lawnmower checkmate as shown on the right.

### Chess Puzzles:

Chess Puzzles can be used for students to solve in pairs and is chess problem-solving. At the end of this lesson plan I have include 4 pages of puzzles which were downloaded from Kidchess.com. There is thousands more chess puzzles online (with solutions) ranging from basic to expert level.

In a chess lesson, I suggest modelling the desired method for students as follows:

1. Recreate the chess puzzle on a real chess board
2. In pairs, students experiment with moves to see if it provides a checkmate
3. Once the checkmate has been found (and CPR has been used to ensure it is checkmate) then students write the solution on the puzzle sheet using chess notation: Example: Rc8 [which is chess notation/shorthand for Rook moves to c8].

<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
K	King	Q	Queen
R	Rook	B	Bishop
N	Knight	x	Captures
+	Check	++ or #	Checkmate
O-O	Castles King's side	O-O-O	Castles Queen's side

Play, play, play

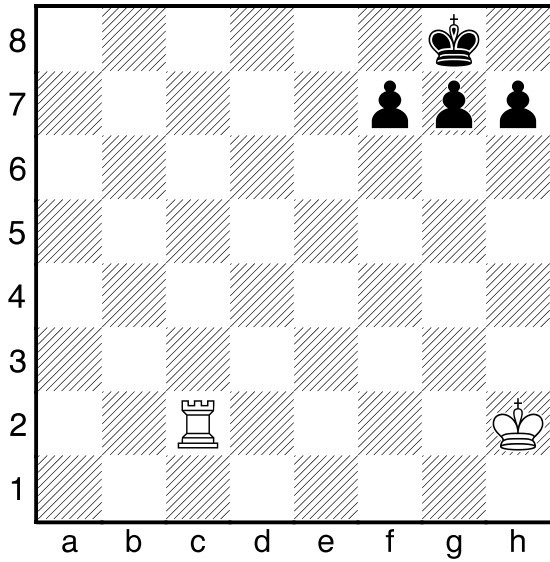
Once the chess teacher believes the students have a medium grasp of the concept then students must be allowed to play “real games” ( with all pieces or using the Fast Forward Chess game - lesson 9 - but playing to checkmate now). It is vital during this playing time that the teacher circulates throughout the games highlighting when the king is in check and must be saved (CPR method).

Note: It will often happen during this time that the King has been in check for several moves unknownst to the players – CPR method should be used immediately here and the game carries on then as before (as opposed to the game having to be started again). These instances will reduce to zero over time.

Students should raise their hands if they think a checkmate has been achieved. The teacher will then assess the potential checkmate with the players (using CPR). If a checkmate has indeed been achieved then all students should freeze their games and observe the checkmate pattern. Students should be able to answer the question: why is it checkmate? The more checkmate patterns a beginner chess player observes the sooner they will gain a full understanding of the checkmate concept.

Note: For checkmate to be present the king must be in check and have no way of getting out of check (no CPR options). Often students will not be able to move their King because everywhere they move will be a move into check. This is not checkmate. The King might not be able to move but the player might be able to move another piece. If a player cannot make any legal move when it is their go then the game is a draw – a stalemate. Stalemates are common for beginner chess players trying to achieve checkmate.

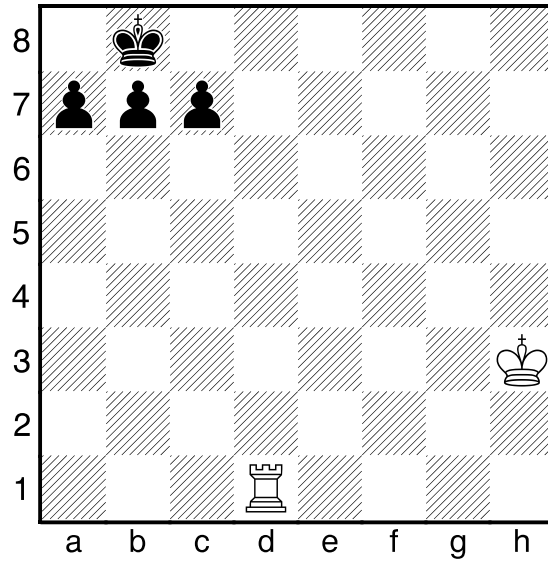
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1



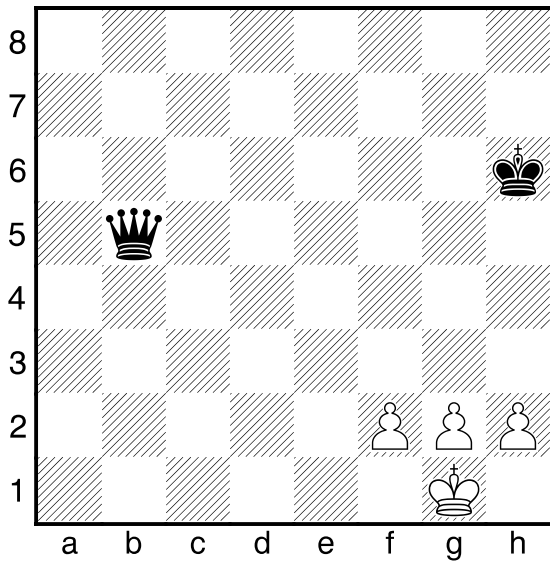
### 3. White to Move & Mate in 1



3

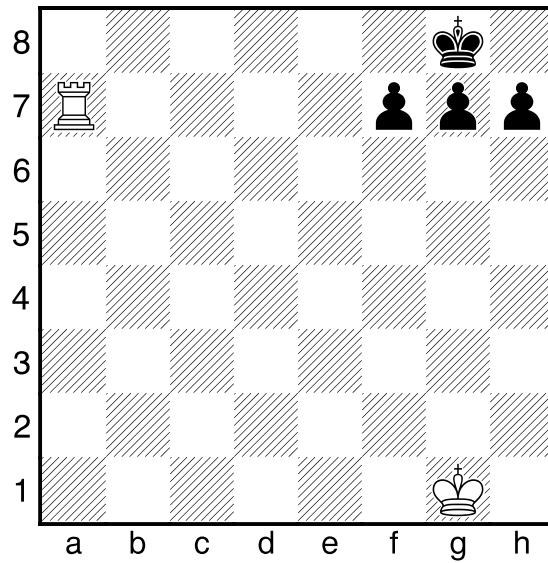


### 2. Black to Move & Mate in 1



2

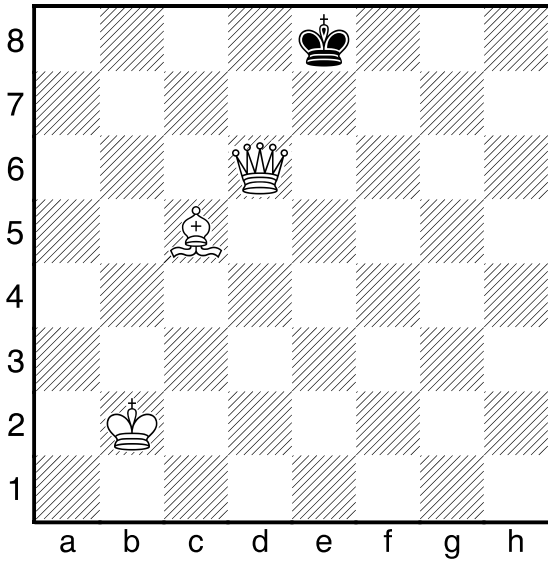
### 4. White to Move & Mate in 1



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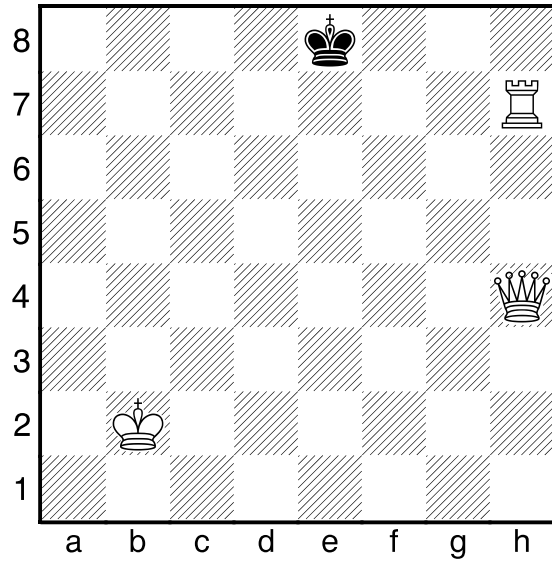
**1. White to Move & Mate in 1**



1



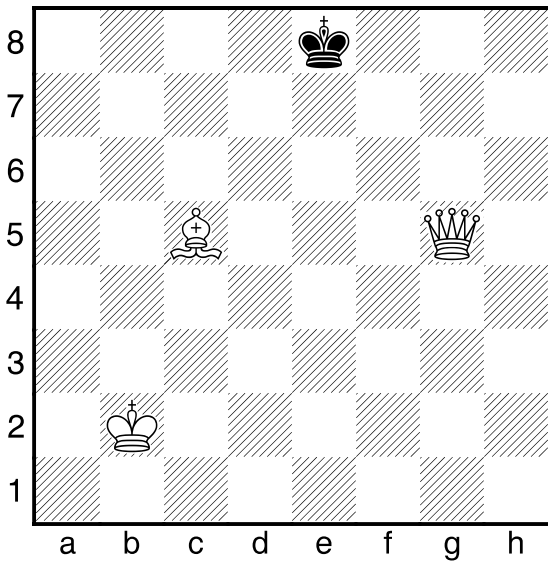
**3. White to Move & Mate in 1**



3



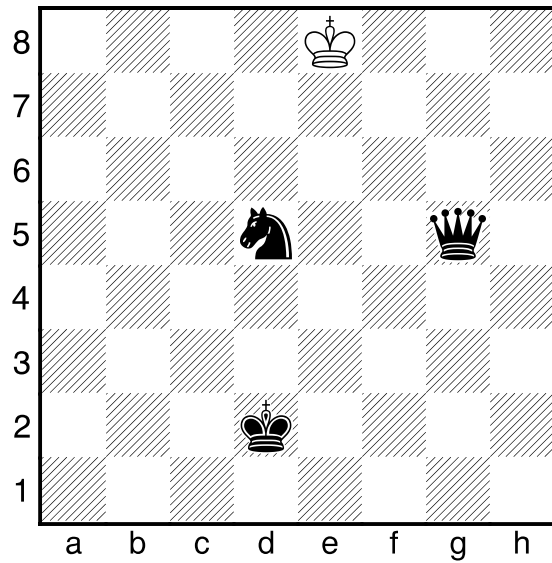
**2. White to Move & Mate in 1**



2

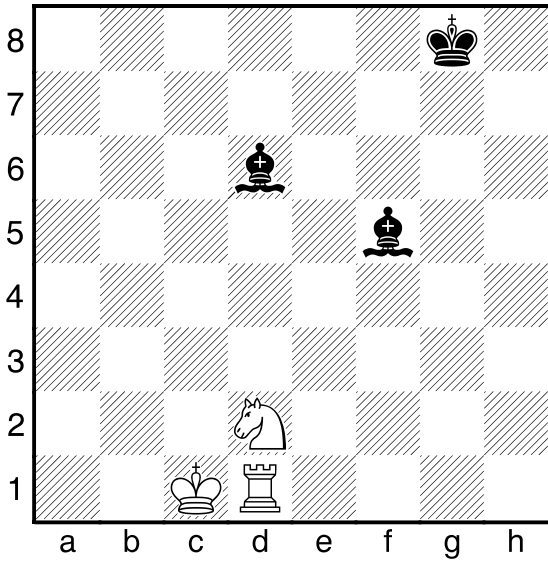


**4. Black to Move & Mate in 1**



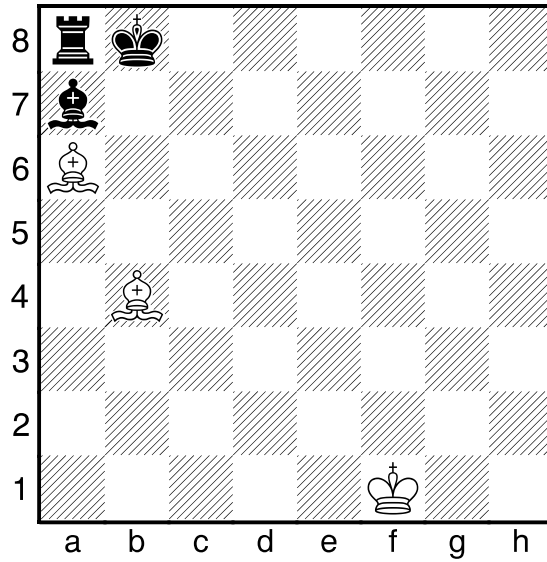
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### 1. Black to Move & Mate in 1



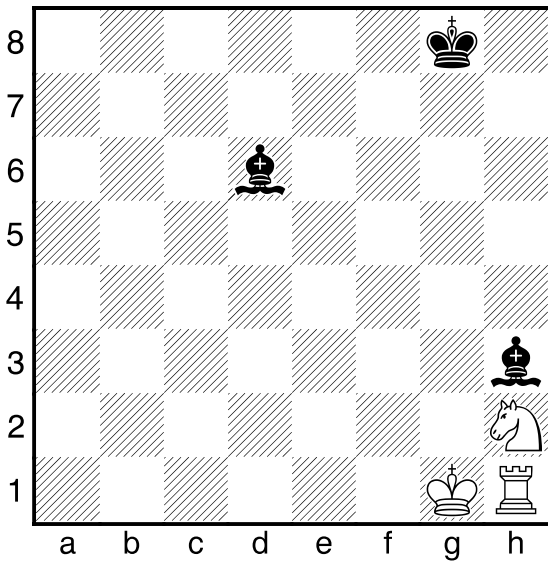
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1

### 3. White to Move & Mate in 1



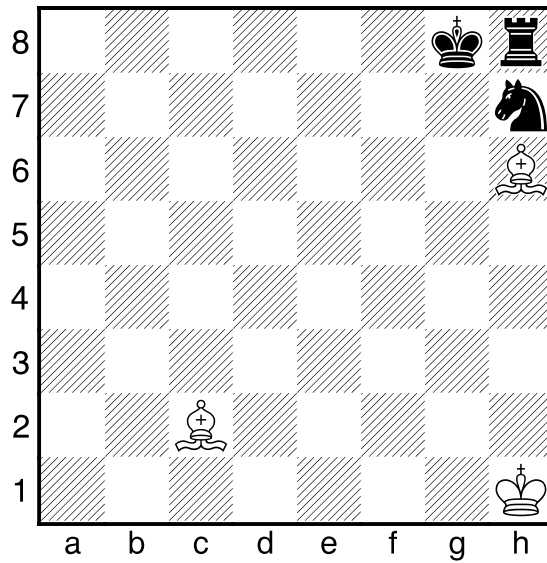
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### 2. Black to Move & Mate in 1



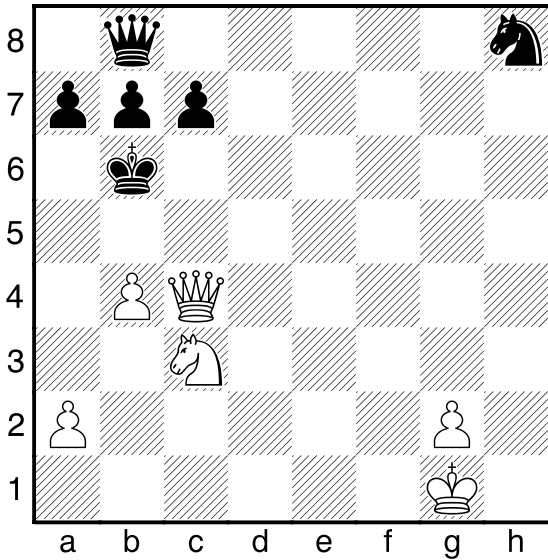
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### 4. White to Move & Mate in 1



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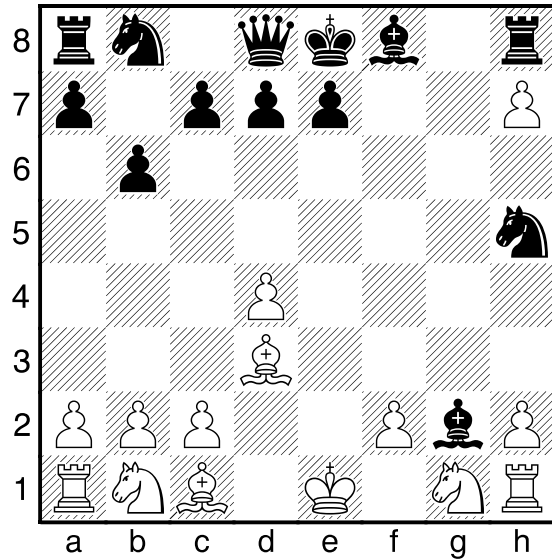
**1. White to Move & Mate in 1**



1



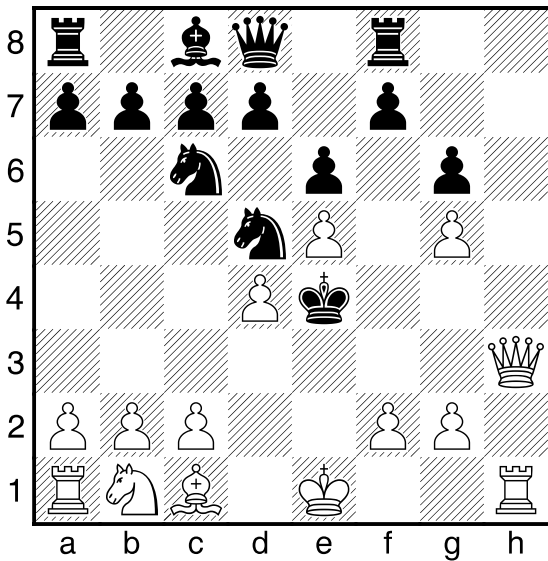
**3. White to Move & Mate in 1**



3



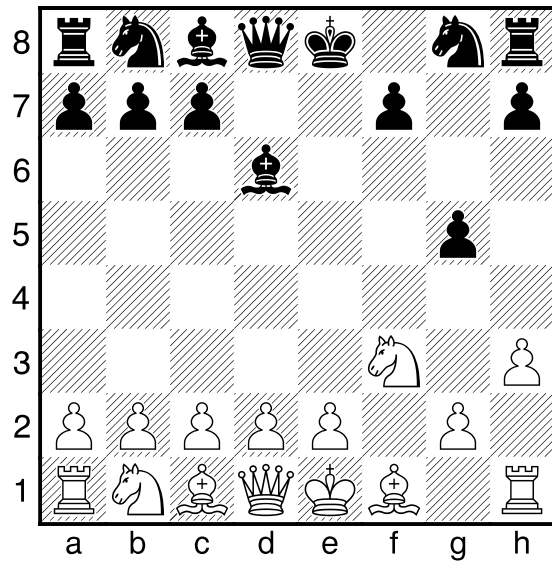
**2. White to Move & Mate in 1**



2



**4. Black to Move & Mate in 1**



4

